

On April 26, 1986, reactor No. 4 at the Chernobyl atomic energy station ignited, causing an explosion, fire, and partial meltdown of the reactor core.

Ten years have now passed since that terrible day.

Today, the ghosts of history's worst nuclear disaster cannot be avoided in the pines and the farmland, now overgrown, that surround Chernobyl.

The city of Pripyat, once home to 40,000, sits empty.

Dozens of villages have been abandoned.

The 134,000 people who were evacuated from the area won't be returning to their homes.

An area the size of Rhode Island is now a dead zone.

The health effects are equally astonishing.

Sadly, cancer among children has tripled.

Ukraine now has the highest rate of infertility in the world.

Birth defects have nearly doubled.

Mr. Speaker, our government, many charitable organizations and individuals have contributed to efforts to recover from the disaster.

We must continue those efforts, and we must enhance them for the people of Ukraine.

Ukraine faces many challenges, not the least of which are the human and economic costs of coping with the effects of Chernobyl.

Today we must pause to remember those who lost their lives and those whose lives were changed forever.

We learned many lessons from that tragedy ten years ago, and now we must move forward and help our friends in Ukraine prepare for the future.

That is why supporting this resolution is so important.

We remember the past and learn from the past.

But we also look forward to a future in which Ukraine and the United States will enjoy even closer ties, and the people of Ukraine will be able to build a new future.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to join us in passing this resolution today.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to take a moment to recognize the outstanding humanitarian work that has been done over the last few years by a group of high school students in my district in New York.

The Ramapo High School Children of Chernobyl fund has provided \$12 million in medicines and other contributions to children in Belarus who were affected by exposure to the Chornobyl radiation.

I am so pleased to note for my colleagues such thoughtful, charitable young people.

I am certain those children in Belarus who have benefitted from these students' humanitarian efforts would want this Congress to know of their helping hand and hearts.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WICKER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 167.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5, rule I, and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all members have five legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Concurrent Resolution 67, the measure just considered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3415, REPEAL OF 4.3-CENT INCREASE IN TRANSPORTATION FUEL TAXES

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 436 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

#### H. RES. 436

*Resolved*, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 3415) to amend to Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the 4.3-cent increase in the transportation motor fuels excise tax rates enacted by the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 and dedicated to the general fund of the Treasury. All points of order against the bill and against its consideration are waived. The amendment printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my very good friend, the gentleman from south Boston, MA [Mr. MOAKLEY], pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, this rule provides for consideration of H.R. 3415, legislation to repeal the 4.3 cent increase in the motor fuel excise tax that was instituted back in 1993. This is closed rule providing for 1 hour of debate divided equally between the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. The rule waives all points of order against the bill and its consideration.

The rule provides for adoption of the amendment printed in the Committee on Rules report. The amendment which was crafted by the chairman of the Committee on Commerce is intended to ensure that the revenue loss from the repeal of the Clinton gas tax is fully offset.

Finally, the rule provides for one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Bill Clinton has had a somewhat spotty and inconsistent record of aligning words with deeds, particularly when it comes to the issues of both taxes and balancing the budget. It began with promises that he made during that 1992 presidential campaign. He promised to provide middle-income families with a tax cut as well as balance the Federal budget. Upon election, his tax cut proposal changed as fast as the calendar turned. The budget deal he struck with the Democrat-controlled Congress in 1993 raised taxes by \$275 billion over 5 years. It was clearly the largest tax increase in history. Incredibly, it also allowed Federal spending to increase by \$300 billion. His so-called deficit reduction was projected to add \$1 trillion to the national debt.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there was no tax cut for middle-income families in the President's 1993 budget.

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That budget was a tax increase, plain and simple. It was a \$275 billion tax increase needed for two reasons: so the President could spend money on new Federal programs and cut less waste from old Federal programs.

In light of the President's promise of a middle-class tax cut, the most egregious tax increase in the President's 1993 tax increase bill was a 4.3 cent a gallon increase in the Federal motor fuel excise tax. President Clinton enacted, without a single vote from Republicans in the Congress, the first increase in the gas tax that was not directly tied to spending on highways and bridges. Let me repeat that. It was the first time ever that a gasoline tax increase was imposed that was not tied directly towards spending on highways and bridges.

Mr. Speaker, this tax increase targeted middle-income working families, placing a bull's-eye on the wallet of every American that drives to work, goes to the mall, or packs the family into the car to take a vacation.